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Testimony about my Bishop¹

In this text I wish to present the figure of Cardinal Franciszek Macharski, my bishop. I am going to do it in the form of a testimony about his pastoral work. I think that my long-standing acquaintance and cooperation with the Cardinal in the Church of Jesus Christ in Kraków – which began in 1948 – gives me the right to do so. Of course, it is going to be a modest testimony – a calendar of a sort.

A presbyter

Seminarist Franciszek Macharski was ordained on Palm Sunday in 1950 at the Church of St. Francis of Assisi in Kraków by Cardinal Prince Adam Stefan Sapieha, archbishop metropolitan of Kraków. I participated in this ceremony and the liturgy was conducted in Latin, according to the Tridentine Rite. The Passion of Christ according to the Gospel of St. Matthew was read instead of the homily.

As a seminarist I used to spend my holidays in Chochółów in the region of Podhale, where Fr. Marian Łaczek ministered as a parish priest, while his brother Zygmunt was a parish priest in the village of Kozy, near Bielsko-Biała. At that time neopresbyter Franciszek Macharski was a vicar there. The two brothers, the parish priests, talked about him many a time. In autumn 1956, while I was visiting Fr. Karol Kozłowski, the rector of the Higher Clerical Seminary in Kraków, I learnt that Fr. Macharski was given a passport and left to study in Switzerland.

From 1962 to 1963, as a prefect of the Higher Clerical Seminary, I used to live together with Fr. Macharski, the headmaster, in the building located at ul. Manifestu Lipcowego 4. Together we witnessed the struggle of Bishop Karol Wojtyła, a capitular vicar of the Archdiocese of Kraków, for the building of the Seminary, which the

¹ Tekst pochodzi z książki o kard. Franciszku Macharskim, która ukaże się nakładem Wydawnictwa „M”.

neighbouring Higher Pedagogical School wanted to take over. The situation was very grave. In order to avoid a forceful takeover, second and third year seminarists were summoned in September, a few weeks before the inauguration of the academic year. At that time bishop Karol Wojtyła consecrated the Clerical Seminary to the Virgin Mary by means of a prayer he himself wrote specially for this particular occasion.

In 1970 Fr. Franciszek Macharski, professor at the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, was appointed to the position of rector of the Clerical Seminary in Kraków. Because I was then transferred to perform my academic duties, I stayed temporarily at Manifestu Lipcowego 4 street in his previous flat. There's one more memory from that period: in 1978, just after the conclave of cardinals, rector Macharski spent some time in Rome. Upon his return, Macharski brought me a letter from the Holy Father John Paul II, in which he expressed his joy over the perspective of my postdoctoral oral examination that was going to take place on the 18th November that year.

And finally I want to say that I participated in the bishop's consecration ceremony of Franciszek Macharski on the 6th January 1979 in St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican. His Holiness John Paul II invited me, Fr. Prof. Stanisław Nagy and Fr. Józef Dowsilas for dinner. I cannot refrain from mentioning the words that he uttered during our meeting. He said, and I quote, "Let the Archbishop entertain the guests, and we'll have a chat here". Not soon afterwards, Abp. F. Macharski's cardinal nomination was announced. Before leaving for the consistory, on the 24th June 1979, he appointed me as his successor at the post of a Canon of the Metropolitan Chapter, recommending the installation to take place in such a way that I would be able to greet him among the members of the chapter during his cardinal ingress. At this point I would like to say that in the chapter I was entrusted with two positions: that of a steward and an archivist.

After the 2nd World War the city council of Kraków de facto took over all the buildings in ul. Kanonicza that once belonged to the chapter. The only building left was the one at no. 21 and three flats (belonging to Fathers: Bogdan Niemczewski, Eugeniusz Florkowski and Czesław Obtulowicz). On the occasion of 1000th anniversary of Christianity in Poland a new idea of the renovation of the whole Kanonicza street came into being. The presence of the Church was not included in the renovation plans. Cardinal Karol Wojtyła demanded that the city council should guarantee a place of residence for the Church in Kanonicza street, and also pleaded with Polish Episcopal Conference and the Office for the Proclamation of Faith. To justify his position he presented the arguments referring to historical, cultural and religious identity of Kraków, and even Poland. All, however, to no avail.

After he was elected as the bishop of Rome in 1978, the matter had to be settled. As the steward of the chapter, I was the one to whom Cardinal Macharski appointed this task. This is not the place to speak of all the problems that the matter entailed. I only talked to the Cardinal about the most important procedures that I had to decide on. He never questioned the decisions I took, some of which were of great prominence and concerned relocating particular people and institutions. One such

particularly important task was the joint initiative of building a house for nuns in the annexe to the tenement house at no. 3. The current presence of the Church in the oldest of the streets in Kraków was decided upon and executed during the time Cardinal Macharski held the position of bishop.

The work that Cardinal Macharski delegated me to do at the Archives and Library of the Metropolitan Chapter in Wawel is generally well documented, so there is no need to elaborate on it any further. Suffice it to say that numerous valuable manuscripts, especially music collections (e.g. the books of the Rorantist Choir) were recovered and the reading room above the Waza Gate was reclaimed for the Archives and Chapter Library as well. Cardinal Macharski was satisfied with the reclaimed goods and gladly kept writing all the necessary letters concerning this matter to various people and institutions.

Bishop and Cardinal

The period of time when Cardinal Macharski ministered to the Archdiocese of Kraków exactly overlaps with the pontificate of St. John Paul II, the pope: 1978–2005. The mutual interaction between the Predecessor and the Successor seems to be indisputable. After all, even Cardinal Macharski himself spoke of it frequently. During each of his pilgrimages to the fatherland, except for the 5th one to Skoczów, Bielsko-Biała and Żywiec (22nd May 1995), John Paul II visited Kraków. I would like to take this opportunity to mention a few of the events that made indelible impression on me.

My work at the Academy of Theology in Kraków – the Pontifical Faculty of Theology (1954–1981) and the Pontifical Academy of Theology (1981–2009) – allows me to look at the ministry, or I would rather say, the service of the Cardinal for the Academy that the God’s Providence let him fulfil. From 1979 to 2005 he held there the position of the Great Chancellor.

At the meeting with the clergy at the Wawel Cathedral, during his first visit to Kraków (06.06.1979), Pope John Paul II informed the priests that he brought two gifts. That is the permission to celebrate Mass and say the Breviary Officium on the Blessed Queen Jadwiga of Poland in the diocese of Kraków, as well as a decree expanding the cult of Saint Stanislaus, the bishop and martyr, over the whole Church (11th April in General Roman Calendar). The necessary documents were issued by the dicasteries of the Roman Curia upon the request of Cardinal Franciszek Macharski. On the 8th June a solemn ceremony closing the Synod of the Archdiocese of Krakow took place at the Wawel Cathedral. It took 9 years of preparations, organised on the initiative of and supervised by Karol Cardinal Wojtyła, to organise the ceremony in observance of 900th anniversary of the martyr’s death of St. Stanislaus, the bishop of Kraków. John Paul II celebrated the mass at the Altar of the Fatherland using

the form of service on the Blessed Queen Jadwiga of Poland, which constituted *de facto* an act of her beatification.

The following day, on the 9th June 1979, the meeting between the representatives of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology and John Paul II was held. During his speech the Pope said: “It is truly in accordance with my own earlier intentions to isolate this specialization [history of the Church] and the specialization of Philosophy in the form of the third faculty of the Academy in Kraków. Please, continue acting in this direction”. In order to fulfil the Pope’s wish on 29.07.1981 Cardinal Macharski sent a letter regarding this matter to Cardinal William. Baum, the prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome. Not waiting for the answer to be officially drawn up by the Congregation, His Holiness John Paul II issued the *Motu proprio Beata Hedvigis* document, establishing on the 8th December 1981 the Pontifical Academy of Theology as an academy consisting of three faculties. The Holy Father, by means of this Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio* and personally took on himself the responsibility to transform the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, that is a one-faculty academy, into a three-faculty academy, the Pontifical Academy of Theology.

The second pilgrimage of John Paul II to the fatherland coincided with the introduction of martial law in Poland. Fr. Franciszek Macharski decided to conclude the First Synod of the Province of Kraków started by Cardinal Karol Wojtyła. In order to do so, a group of redactors (Fathers: Stanisław Nagy, Tadeusz Pieronek and Adam Kubiś) was appointed to draw up the final document. It is comprised of two parts. The first one presents the current situation in the Archdiocese of Kraków, and the second contains an extensive selection of indications and decisions. The closing of the Synod took place on 22nd June at the Wawel Cathedral and was celebrated with a solemn Mass during which diocesan bishops received from the hands of the Holy Father the document titled *Communio et Communicatio*.

Because of the martial law the meeting of the faculty of the age-old Theological Academy in the academic environment of Kraków was held on the same day, after dinner in the chapel of the Cracovian archbishops at Franciszkańska 3 street. The Holy Father said: “I would like to thank you very much for the invitation and for the meeting. I think that it is not something we could miss on the day that started from the meeting with the Jagiellonian University. And the Faculty of Theology has constantly been a part of this meeting with the University, as it has been six hundred years.”

On the 10th October, the same year, the delegation of the Pontifical Academy of Theology led by Cardinal Macharski took part in the canonization of Saint Maximilian Maria Kolbe. In the evening before supper John Paul II welcomed the delegates in a private library. The meeting was organized to thank for the establishment of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków in 1981. It was clearly visible in the face and voice of the Holy Father, while he was thanking Mary, the Seat of Wisdom for that gift, that he was overcome by emotion.

On the 23rd June 1983, John Paul II concluded his apostolic pilgrimage to the fatherland with a trip to the Chochołowska and Jarząbcza Valleys, where he met Lech Wałęsa, at that time a legendary leader of the Solidarity movement, and his family in a mountain hostel at Chochołowska Clearing. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Cardinal Macharski for inviting me to participate in this event.

The Congregation for the Causes of Saints issued a *Declaration on the Blessed Jadwiga Queen of Poland* (08.08.1986) regarding the discussion that followed the de facto beatification of Jadwiga of Poland, which settled in a canonical way her ascent to the altars. In Kraków Cardinal Franciszek Macharski prepared the translation of her relics beneath the altar of the Wawel Cross. The translation ceremony, during which the Holy Father read a magnificent homily on the Cross of Jesus Christ, on the Wawel Cross, and the Cross of Jadwiga, took place on 10th June 1987. Afterwards, in the treasury of the Wawel Cathedral a meeting was held in which the teaching staff of the Pontifical Academy of Theology and the representatives of the Jagiellonian University and other academies participated.

We are greatly indebted to Cardinal Macharski for giving the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków the historical house of Jan Długosz, a great historian and canon of the Cathedral Chapter, located at Kanonicza 25 street, to serve as the offices of the rectorate. Having consecrated the building on the 13th August 1991, His Holiness John Paul II said: “I would be able to say a lot of things about this place, as a fair amount of my life has been connected with this courtyard, this porch, this chapel and this canteen – therefore I fear that by saying a lot, I would not say enough”. It was a special and long-awaited day for the Holy Father.

It is important to mention here a ceremony of paramount importance, that is the consecration and inauguration of the new premises of the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków that took place on the 8th December 1993, at Franciszkańska 1 street (the Palace of the Sanguszko Family), in the presence of the rector of the Jagiellonian University and the representatives of other academies in Kraków. Cardinal Macharski availed himself of this opportunity to deliver his own address as the Great Chancellor. He himself wrote on Fr. Kubiś’s invitation card the following words: “The archdiocese bequeathed this house through the Archbishop – when applying for the permission to build a new place of residence for PAT (Pontifical Academy of Theology) turned out to be infeasible – already after the Curia started the renovation to meet the needs of the Academy.”

We cannot forget about the issue of conferring the academic degree of magister (comparable to Master’s Degree) on the students, which was introduced by Cardinal Wojtyła. As a rector of the Higher Clerical Seminary in Kraków, Fr. Macharski made it possible for the seminarists to earn this degree. Later, as a Cracovian bishop he declared it compulsory for the seminarists to have Master’s Degree before they are ordained.

The facts mentioned above show that Cardinal Macharski as the Great Chancellor was a true successor of Cardinal Wojtyła, which can be seen in the way he carried on and implemented the fundamental plans that his predecessor had for the Academy of Theology.

In 1997 the Pontifical Academy of Theology celebrated the 600th anniversary of the Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University. The key points of the jubilee were the canonization of Blessed Queen Jadwiga of Poland, the founder of the University, which took place in the Błonia Park in Kraków and the meeting of the representatives of the academic circles, the College of Rectors of the Universities of Poland, the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland, the delegates of the central and local authorities and friends with the Holy Father that was held in the Collegiate Church of St. Anne in Kraków and in the courtyard of *Collegium Maius* of the Jagiellonian University on the 8th June 1997. It crucial to emphasise that it was under the patronage of Cardinal Macharski and the rector of the Pontifical Academy of Theology that the process for declaring heroic virtues and the miracle of Blessed Queen Jadwiga of Poland was conducted. A year-long celebration of the jubilee constituted undoubtedly one of the most important events in the academic history of the Third Polish Republic.

During the pilgrimage of the Holy Father to his fatherland in 1999 the archdiocese of Kraków celebrated its 1000th anniversary. It was unfortunate that owing to his health problems, John Paul II was not able to participate in the gathering that brought 2 million faithful to the Błonia Park in Kraków on this particular day. Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Vatican Secretary of State concelebrated the Mass in the absence of the Pope, and the homily of His Holiness was read by Cardinal Macharski, Pope's successor in the See of St. Stanislaus.

A special feature of Cardinal Macharski's spirituality as a priest is the devotion to the Merciful Love – an attribute of God revealed in the Old and new Testament. The bishop's motto on his coat of arms: "Jesus, I Trust in You!", proves it to be true. With this in his mind, he started building the Sanctuary of the Divine Mercy in Kraków, Łagiewniki, where the relics of St. Faustina, the Virgin are laid. Already on the 7th June 1997 the Holy Father visited the Sanctuary at Łagiewniki, not only out of a heartfelt need, but at that time also driven by the apocalyptic condition of humankind. During his – as it turned out – last pilgrimage to his fatherland, the Pope consecrated the Sanctuary on the 17th August 2002 and put the world into the hands of Divine Mercy. Then the shrine was designated as a basilica.

On his way back from Łagiewniki to the Bishop's Palace His Holiness made a stop at the construction site where the new library for the Pontifical Academy of Theology was being built and made a short speech. He uttered the following words: "I am really grateful for this stop between Łagiewniki and Franciszkańska, very grateful indeed. I wish to say that every day I send my prayers for your academies, for the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, for the Catholic University of Lublin

in Lublin, and also for the Angelicum in Rome, for all the rectors, professors and students, living and deceased”. The library mentioned before was built in the area of the Third Campus of Jagiellonian University. The Cardinal gave his assent to purchase there from the Jagiellonian University a 5 hectare allotment that was meant to be used by the Pontifical Academy of Theology, today known as the Pontifical University of John Paul II. It makes it possible for the Pontifical University to be present among the great variety of departments representing natural sciences.

At the Polish Episcopal Conference Cardinal Macharski used to hold the position of the president of the Commission for Catholic Education. In the 1980s the talks were begun on the legal recognition of the status of pontifical academies in Poland. The talks were finalized on the 30th June 1989 when the Cardinal, together with the Minister of Education Jacek Fisiak, signed an agreement of historic prominence for the Catholic education in Poland. The agreement stated that the Polish State recognized all the academic degrees conferred by Catholic universities. It also delineated the procedures of those titles being conferred in the future, so that they were legally binding.

When Cardinal Macharski presided over the Commission for Catholic Education at the Polish Episcopal Conference, two Congresses of Polish Theologians were organised and published at the Catholic University of Lublin: in 1983 “Christianity and Polish Culture” and in 1989 “Byzantine-Slavic Christianity”.

To conclude

I wish to thank Cardinal Macharski wholeheartedly for his participation, together with other auxiliary bishops, in the funeral of my mother, late Zofia Kubiś (on the 11th September 1990), with whom he had a few friendly, brief words during his inspection of the Mogilany parish. The performance of the last offices also constitutes a characteristic feature of his ministry as a bishop.

Summary

Testimony about my Bishop

The paper is a small part of the books of Rev. Adam Kubiś on card. Franciszek Macharski. The article presents an abbreviated biography of the Cardinal starting with his priesthood and concluding with his becoming a cardinal. The text offers some personal reflections on the person, life and work of card. Franciszek Macharski from the perspective of Rev. Adam Kubiś who worked very closely with the Cardinal for many years.

Keywords

Card. Franciszek Macharski, Kraków, Catholic Church

